

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am signing Assembly Bill 987 (Keene) which would extend indefinitely a sunset exception to the standard necessary small school (NSS) funding qualifications for the Plumas Unified School District (PUSD) and delete the requirement that the District provide a report on future funding plans to the state.

While I do not wish to loosen the restrictions on NSS funding in current law, I believe that PUSD has special circumstances that warrant continuing the exception initially approved in 1997 and continued through the 2003-04 school year through subsequent legislation. PUSD is a very large district geographically, which must maintain 17 schools, including four comprehensive high schools. Many of the District's 2,900 pupils already face very long commutes to attend school, and I am concerned that, in absence of this bill, the District may be forced to close schools and further exacerbate commuting times and District transportation costs.

I further note that demographic trends suggest the district will qualify for NSS funding within 2 or 3 years and therefore, I am reluctant to have the district make drastic changes to its operations in the interim.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger